

Rowan University

Rowan Digital Works

Theses and Dissertations

5-13-2005

Planning procedures for school media centers

Heather A. Deitch
Rowan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you -
share your thoughts on our feedback form.**

Recommended Citation

Deitch, Heather A., "Planning procedures for school media centers" (2005). *Theses and Dissertations*. 988.

<https://rdw.rowan.edu/etd/988>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Rowan Digital Works. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Rowan Digital Works. For more information, please contact LibraryTheses@rowan.edu.

PLANNING PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL MEDIA CENTERS

by
Heather A. Deitch

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master of Arts
of
The Graduate School
at
Rowan University
May 9, 2005

Approved by

Date Approved May 13, 2005

©2005 Heather Deitch

ABSTRACT

Heather A. Deitch
PLANNING PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL MEDIA CENTERS
2004/2005
Dr. Marilyn Shontz
Master of Arts in School and Public Librarianship

The purpose of this study was to determine if media specialists were using effective planning processes in renovating school libraries or building new school library facilities. A second purpose was to propose recommendations for improving planning processes to make them more effective and efficient in creating the best possible school library facility. A researcher devised checklist was created through a literature search and was presented on two electronic listservs. Thirty responses were used from two email electronic listservs. Those who responded did use some or all of the outlined planning procedures that were provided in the electronic survey. The results showed that those who had renovated their library were more involved in the planning processes. When the respondents were asked how the process could be changed to better benefit the project, those who responded had the consensus that the media specialist should be aware of all steps, the procedures for those steps and timelines for the entire project. Overall, those who responded gave immense feedback on improvement of the planning procedures. Further studies are recommended in order to revise the planning procedures for renovating and/or building new school media centers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
LIST OF FIGURES.....	iv
I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	1
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	7
III. METHODOLOGY.....	16
IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA.....	21
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.....	38
REFERENCES.....	47
APPENDIX A - COVER LETTER.....	48
APPENDIX B - QUESTIONNAIRE.....	50

LIST OF FIGURES

	PAGE
Figure 1: Grade Levels Serviced by Media Center.....	22
Figure 2: Number of Students in School that are Serviced by the Media Center	23
Figure 3: Number of Media Specialists Working in Each Library.....	23
Figure 4: Highest Degree Held by Head Librarian.....	24
Figure 5: Renovated Media Centers vs. Newly Built Facilities.....	24
Figure 6: Formation of a Planning Committee.....	25
Figure 7: Preliminary Needs Assessments and Recommendations.....	27
Figure 8: Developmental Phase.....	29
Figure 9: Construction Document Phase.....	30
Figure 10: Project Needs Met by New Facility or Renovation Project.....	31
Figure 11: Successful Project.....	33
Figure 12: Formation of a Planning Committee and Preliminary Needs Assessments and Recommendations.....	40
Figure 13: Developmental Phase and Construction Document Phase.....	42
Figure 14: Construction Phase and Final Phase.....	43

CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

With the inability of older school libraries to accommodate the changes needed to meet today's educational challenges, educational planners are forced to refocus on their current facilities. Many library facilities built during the school building reconstruction boom of the 1960s and 1970s were not built with the flexibility to expand to meet the technological needs of this century.

With the collaboration of administrators, architects and school library media specialists, a planning process can be implemented to create new spaces for effective school media centers. The result of renovations and/or building a new library facility would be a school library media center with flexibility and the capacity to grow and meet both present and future needs. "Planning for flexible space and future needs will enable reconfiguration of school media centers as collections grow and change in emphasis; as programs, teaching, and learning styles change; and even as newer technologies emerge" (Klasing, 1991, p. xii).

Significance of the Topic

Many school libraries were built during the 1960s and 1970s and they are now in need of renovations, additions and/or a completely new facility. These changes are needed to accommodate growth of additional media technology, new technology and

the growth of book collections. In the past school libraries were considered just libraries containing books; now libraries have moved into the age of true media centers. School libraries now have computers with Internet access, OPACS, word processing, distance learning equipment as well as book collections. Often, additional space is needed to hold many classes or meetings at one time.

“School library media specialists are seldom prepared by training or experience to meet the challenges of planning for new or renovated facilities” (Klasing, 1991, p. xii). But in order to make an effective media center, media specialists are faced with issues such as working with architects, administrators, the community, and staff to plan for the changes that are needed to make an efficient and effective school media center. According to Klasing, “too often, poor planning and limited dialogue between the school and architectural teams leaves educators with a facility that shapes the school library media program, rather than the reverse” (p. xiii).

Purposes of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if media specialists were using effective planning processes in renovating school libraries or building new school library facilities. A second purpose was to propose recommendations for improving planning processes to make them more effective and efficient in creating the best possible school library facility.

Research Questions

The following questions were answered by this study:

- What planning processes or strategies did media specialists use in renovating or building a new library facility?

- How effective were the strategies the media specialist used?
- After completing the projects, what recommendations did media specialists suggest to improve planning strategies?

Definition of Terms

- Completion of a new building – “The date when the architect declares that all work is completed and all problems are corrected and that everything is acceptable to the contract” (Klasing, 1991, p. 67).
- Completion of renovation – “The date when all changes have been made to an area that was being change” (Klasing, 1991, p. 67).
- Email electronic listserv – “A type of software used to manage a mailing list, which allows special interest groups or professional associations to provide a distributed electronic mail membership list on the Internet. All members of a listserv can post messages to or receive messages from other members on the mail list” (McCain & Merrill, 2001, p. 116).
- Functional library facility – “A school library that has flexible space is technology ready, provides ample space for teaching and allows for growth of book collections” (Klasing, 1991, p. 67).
- Library media specialist – “A person with certification and broad professional preparation, both in education and library media, with competencies to carry out a media program. The library media specialist is the media professional in the school program” (Klasing, 1991, p. 67).
- New building – The construction or addition of a new school media center.

- Planning strategies/processes – The steps taken to plan and execute a renovation and/or building of a new school library facility.
- Renovation –“Repair or improvement of something already existing” (Klasing, 1991, p. 65).
- School library media center – “An area or system of areas in an elementary, middle or high school where a full range of information resources, materials, equipment and services are accessible to students, school staff and the educational community” (Klasing, 1991, p. 67).

Limitations and Assumptions

This study was limited to the school library media specialist’s opinions and perceptions about planning for renovations or planning new building projects. This research did not include principals, administrators or architects’ opinions and perceptions. This study also made the assumption that the library media specialists answered the questions honestly and accurately. The honesty and accuracy of their answers could depend on how long ago their renovations or new building projects were completed. The sample was composed of volunteer school media specialists, with the assumption that their answers would be accurate and honest. If the school media specialists were forced to respond to the questionnaire, their answers may not have been accurate and/or honest. Also, the response rate may not have been as high if school media specialists were forced to respond.

Since this study was based on the assumption that school library media specialists have used planning processes or strategies to complete renovations or

new school library building facilities, this was also a limitation. There were limited research findings on the analysis stage of the finished renovations and/or building of a new library facility planning procedures and strategies. Also, there were limited research findings on the effectiveness of planning procedures and strategies to complete renovations and/or building a new library facility.

References

- Brown, C. R. (2002). *Interior design for libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Klasing, J. P. (1991). *Designing and renovating school library media centers*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- McCain, M. M. & Merrill, M. (2001). *Dictionary for school library media specialists, a practical and comprehensive guide*. Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.
- Thompson, G. (1989). *Planning and design of library buildings, third edition*. Boston: Butterworth Architecture.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Planning Phases of a Library Building or Renovation Project

Library building or renovation projects typically begin with the realization by staff, users and administration that a library is inadequate and out-of-date. “Effective building projects, new buildings, expansions and renovations begin with an assessment of the existing building and determination of what is required in the new or renovated space” (Brown, 2002, p. 9). Planning, assessments and recommendations are made by a planning committee, which usually includes library staff, faculty members and administration. Klasing added, “It is inherent in the process that a continuous dialogue between the school planning team and the architectural team occur” (Klasing, 1991, p.1). The two teams must continuously meet and discuss any problems, delays, or new design ideas.

Based on the assessments and recommendations, a preliminary program is then developed of the project that is to be completed in order to come up with the amount of funding needed. According to Serena Fenton, (1999), author of the article *Architectural Follies*, there are five basic stages for constructing new school libraries. The first stage is the information gathering stage of the new project or the schematic design stage. Committees are set up to find design styles of rooms, basic sketches

and ideas are drawn and written down. Information is gathered about how many students will be using the library, what services will be offered and possible layout designs are taken into account.

“Step two is the developmental phase; this is when the parts of the building begin to take on a distinct personality” (Fenton, 1999, p. 27). Pertinent information is provided to the architect, during this phase. Daily functions, location of windows, counter space, work areas and an overall floor plan are established. State regulations and federal building codes help to shape the design of the media center. Drawings are presented to the client for approval, with major items in place and minor items such as paint color waiting to be addressed.

“The third phase, the construction development stage, the architectural drawings cease to be artistic renderings and finally become formal, legal binding documents” (Fenton, 1999, p. 28). These documents are used to secure contractors’ bids and guide the actual construction of the library. After plans have been finalized the construction phase begins. The library media specialist assists the architect by being available to answer questions. In the final phase, the architect is preparing a “punch list,” or a list of odds and ends that need attention. The school media specialist is also taking note of construction needs that are to be attended to before the architect and final construction is completed. The construction or renovation project is now completed.

The finished media center should be effective for the patrons, teachers and library staff’s uses. “The effect of the media center upon its occupants is the result of a complexity of factors which range from the morale of the staff, the often

unconscious influence of its décor and layout, the flexibility of its arrangement, the variety of surfaces, volumes, spaces, textures, colors, and traffic patterns” (Jussim, 1974, p. 9). All of these factors build the media center from the inside out. “The school media center should represent the planner’s thoughts and beliefs about students, about education, and about the goals of the school” (Vandergrift, 1976, p.10). As Vandergrift stated, “Too little has been said about the composition of environments that make it possible for students to use facilities wisely and effectively” (Vandergrift, 1976, p. 10).

Case Studies

In 1982, as reported by Klasing (1991), Bard and Spencer, completed a study of a renovation project of a media center built in 1962. The case study was done because of the lack of guidelines found in the district. They completed the steps for renovation similar to those described by Fenton (1999). Progress was charted of the demolition and renovation of the media center. Collections were stored and only those books and resources that were specifically requested by staff were pulled and kept in the teachers’ classrooms. A custom circulation desk was designed by the architect that would accommodate the new automation system for the new facility. A computer room was added to the library that would also hold microfiche and periodicals and any other technology equipment that would be housed in the media center. A graphics laboratory was included in the design of the library, so that a laminator, computer, copy machine, cabinets and sink would have its own area. This area also lent itself to being a great work area. Three other areas were included in the design: a periodical storage room, an audio-visual storage area and an audio-visual

equipment room. Three additional rooms were included for storage. “Great strains were placed on the staff and students, but the renovated facility produced a beautiful, functional library media center” (Klasing, 1991, p. 46). After the project was completed, no follow-up study was done on the effectiveness of the design and renovations processes. This proved to be a major flaw of all of the renovation and building projects that were examined for this literature search.

Another case study, of an elementary school library in Florida, went from a renovation project and turned into a new construction project, (Klasing, 1997). This planning team also went through the planning processes of constructing a new facility, schematic design phase, presentation of construction documents, bids on furniture and bids on construction were done and finally the construction process was completed. Many problems arose through out each of the phases. For example, asbestos was found to have contaminated the building, which called for the need of asbestos abatement plans. With the finding of asbestos, further funding was granted which allowed for the new construction of the media center. After the construction was completed, a final list or punch list was made of any corrections, addition of outlets, any features that were inoperable and suggestions for changes in the educational specifications. The community helped the media center move into the new facility. “The new structure speaks to the people who have few structures of real beauty in their environs; it speaks to school-children and staff as the facility allows creative program ideas and provides an attractive environment to find information” (Klasing, 1991, p. 61.). Again, this study did not evaluate the effectiveness of the

new construction and the changes that were completed after the construction process was completed.

Jane Anne Hannigan and Kay E. Vandergrift conducted an exploratory research project of students' views of the school media center. This study looked at the student's viewpoint of school media center facilities. The exploratory study was conducted by surveying elementary and secondary school students' opinions. Various instruments were used to survey students' opinions. Survey questions were geared toward the age level and ability of students. Students were surveyed on their perceptions of space and facilities of school media centers. Language used in the surveys was geared toward a students' understanding of library terminology. "This study's objective was to determine whether students would articulate specific information about school media center facilities and whether students could ascertain whether whatever information was forthcoming would coincide with adult statements of the topic" (Hannigan & Vandergrift, 1978, p.18).

"The survey's findings demonstrated that students of all ages are eager to share specific perceptions of, and wishes for, such facilities and that, although they expressed many concerns in common with adults, the emphasis was often quite different" (Hannigan & Vandergrift, 1978, p. 18). The results showed as a whole that students felt there was a need for space in a media center to be set aside for group work as well as privacy. Students also voiced their opinions that resources and space should be made for alternative students with special needs. Students also talked about proper signage, audio-visual equipment and audio-visual rooms, the need for computers with the card catalog of the library, comfortable seating, large spaces and

windows with plenty of light illuminating the library. Display areas and bulletin boards were also desired by students. Vandergrift and Hannigan did compare student responses to those of adults, but the adult opinions were their own. The responses were said to be very similar, with the surprising addition that students felt the need for copiers and water fountains as also being important in school media centers.

The authors of the study stated that further work should be done on students' opinions as well as parents, and teachers and other adult opinions should be researched and compared. "The study also concludes that further use of these surveys would provide planners with the kind of information that would enable them to design and build media center facilities most responsive to the needs of students in schools" (Hannigan & Vandergrift, 1978, p. 25).

"Janis Wolkenbreit, head librarian at Amherst Regional High School in Amherst, Massachusetts, offered advice after completing construction of a new library building" (Erickson & Markuson, 2001, pp. 84-85). She said in order to prepare for the entire process, she did a lot of reading on library design and exemplary library programs, attended conferences and visited libraries. Wolkenbreit completed the detailed planning of the library; a committee did educational specifications. A consultant was also hired to help with the planning process. After the project was completed, Wolkenbreit evaluated the finished media center. She commented that she would have liked the library to be a bit larger, so that there was additional space for the collection. The library accommodated three classes at one time with additional space left over for individual users. She claimed that she would not change too much in her design of the media center, because her philosophy was to

have print, non-print and electronic resources intermingled through out the room. She did wish that the new library would be in close proximity to a computer lab to teach skills. Some of the advice offered by Wolkenbreit when designing a facility included:

Try to get help. Let your program define the facility. The architecture should not impede the functioning of your program. Challenge the “it has always been done like this.” Involve yourself, before you’re asked and before something bad happens. Don’t let others make decisions best made by you.

Don’t be afraid to disagree. Don’t always accept the first idea proposed.

Avoid the situation in which the architect gets one set of information from you and a conflicting set of information from someone else. Look at plans from a users set of views. Don’t plan to fill every nook and cranny. Don’t design just for you. Check and recheck the location of light switches. Remember telephones. Avoid designing or purchasing anything that encourages young children to run, jump, or climb. Assume nothing. Keep your sense of humor (Erickson & Markuson, 2001, pp. 84-85).

Summary

In 1982, Bard and Spencer (Klasing, 1991) completed a study of a renovation project. The study was done because of the lack of guidelines given for renovation projects in their district. The study outlined all of the changes and phases that were completed. Assessments were not done of the effectiveness of the procedures used to complete the project or the effectiveness of the finished project. A second case study completed in Florida, again outlined the procedures and planning processes of new construction of a media center facility. The study discussed problems as the project

was completed and talked of the finished attractive new media center environment.

The study did not analyze the effectiveness of the planning process after the completion of the project.

Another exploratory study completed by Jane Anne Hannigan and Kay E. Vandergrift analyzed students' viewpoints of school media center facilities. Survey questions were used to find out the views of how students would change media centers and improve their usage by students and staff. "Vandergrift concluded that too little has been said about the composition of environments that make it possible for students to use facilities wisely and effectively" (Vandergrift, 1976, p. 10). Their study did not analyze finished facilities after using student viewpoints and the effectiveness of the procedures being used. The study concluded by stating, "Further use of viewpoint surveys would provide planners with the information needed to design and build new media centers," Hannigan & Vandergrift, p. 25). No follow up research was found by this researcher pertaining to their conclusions.

References

- Brown, C. R. (2002). *Interior design for libraries: Drawing on function & appeal*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Erickson, R., & Markuson, C. (2001). *Designing a school library media center for the future*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Fenton, S. (1999, February). Architectural follies. *School Library Journal*. 45: 26-29.
- Hannigan, J. A., & Estes, G. E. (Ed.) (1978). *Media center facilities design*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Hannigan, J. A., & Vandergrift, K. E. The student's viewpoint. In J.A. Hannigan & G. E. Estes (Eds.) *Media center facilities design* (pp. 14-25). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Jussim, E. (1974). Personal space and the media center. In J.A. Hannigan & G.E. Estes (Eds.) *Media center facilities design* (pp. 7-10). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Klasing, J. (1991). *Designing and renovating school library media centers*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Vandergrift, K. E. (1976). Persons and environment. In J.A. Hannigan & G. E. Estes (Eds.), *Media center facilities design* (pp. 10-13). Chicago: American Library Association.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Overall Design and Justification

This was a descriptive study concerning the process and strategies that a school media specialist goes through to complete a school library media center renovation or new construction project. Email surveys were used for data collection and analysis.

An exploratory survey or experience survey was done using qualitative research. The purpose of the exploratory survey was to gather and synthesize school media specialists' experiences after the completion of renovating and/or building a new school library facility. Insight was sought on the effectiveness of planning procedures and strategies and recommendations on improvement of planning procedures and strategies. Since there was little research on the effectiveness of planning procedures and strategies and possible ways to improve them, this experience survey gave the potential for further research in this area.

Statement of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine if school media specialists were using effective planning processes in renovating school libraries and/or building new school library facilities. The second purpose was to propose recommendations for

improving planning processes to make them more effective and efficient in creating the best possible school library facility.

Research Questions

The following questions were answered by this study:

- What planning processes or strategies did media specialists use in renovating or building a new library facility?
- How effective were the strategies the media specialist used?
- After completing the projects, what recommendations did media specialists suggest to improve planning strategies?

Population and Sample

The population consisted of those school media specialists who participated in renovating or building new school library facilities. The sample was composed of those school media specialists who responded voluntarily to an electronic listserv invitation and completed an email survey. A request to participate in the survey was posted and those who volunteered were asked to answer a two-page survey by e-mail. The request was reposted on two different electronic listserv for volunteers and surveys were gathered via email.

Variables

The variables in this study were the extent of the school media specialist's use of planning, procedures, strategies and the school media specialist's perceptions of the planning, effectiveness and success of the use of the planning procedures and strategies for renovating or building a new school media center.

Method of Data Collection

An email request was posted to two electronic (see Appendix A) listservs asking for school media specialists to volunteer and answer survey questions in regards to planning procedures and strategies for renovating and/or building a new library facility. One listserv used was through EMAnj which is based in Trenton, New Jersey. The mission of the EMAnj was to be advocates for high standards for librarianship and library media programs in the public, private and parochial schools in New Jersey and to ensure that students and staff become effective users of information (www.emanj.org). The EMAnj listserv is a discussion group for school librarians in New Jersey. The listserv URL is EMAnj@yahoogroups.com. The survey was then viewed, filled out and returned.

The same email survey was then posted to CALIBK12 listserv sponsored by the California School Library Association. The association encourages professional growth, provides avenues for sharing common concerns, represents the interests of school libraries to the Legislature and the California Department of Education, and enables members to serve the educational needs of the multi-culturally diverse students of California (www.schoollibrary.org).

Instruments Used

A researcher designed checklist (see Appendix B) listed recommended procedures, processes and any strategies that may have been used in the planning of a renovation or new school/media center construction project. Open-ended questions were asked at the end of the survey in regards to the effectiveness of the planning process, changes that would have been made to the finished project, the success of the

project, what made the project a success and any recommendations that could be given to someone who was about to embark on a renovation or the building of a new media center. The check list items and open-ended questions were based on information from the literature search completed.

Reliability and Validity

The survey was pretested among other school library media specialists. Minor spelling changes and wordings were changed in the survey, before it was posted. This study was reliable based on the responses from the respondents. The surveys were sent via email through two electronic listservs and were kept in confidence. Respondent's names, schools and/or districts were not used in the study. Responses were recorded and compared. Because the surveys were sent via email and responses were kept in confidence, the study was valid for the selected sample.

References

- California School Library Association. (2004). Retrieved April 8, 2005 from <http://www.schoollibrary.org>
- Educational Media Association of New Jersey. (2005). Retrieved April 4, 2005, from <http://www.emanj.org>
- Fenton, S. (1999, February). Architectural follies. *School Library Journal*. 45: 26-29.
- Powell, R.R. (2003). *Basic research methods for librarians*. Greenwich Connecticut: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

CHAPTER IV
ANALYSIS OF DATA
Procedures/Methods Used

The researcher designed survey, Renovating/Building School Media Centers, located in Appendix B, was sent out via email to the EMAnj (Educational Media Association of New Jersey) listserv. The listserv is located at EMAnj@yahoogroups.com. The email was posted on the listserv on February 21st of 2005. Three responses were received and a reminder was reposted on February 26th. Three more responses were received to the EMAnj listserv. On March 2nd of 2005, a notice was posted to the California School Library Association (CALIB12@listproc.sjsu.edu) with the call for responses to the survey. A total of 7 responded to the EMAnj listserv and 26 responded to the CALIB12 listserv. Three responses were not able to be used because the respondents were in the process of renovating or building a new facility at the time the survey was given. The survey was open for responses until March 10th. Seven responses from the EMAnj listserv and 23 responses from the CALIB12 listserv were used to perform the study.

The data from the survey were taken and recorded on an EXCEL spreadsheet. The results were then tabulated and graphed.

Variables Studied

The variables studied were the planning procedures and strategies used by media specialists during renovating or building a new library facility. The effectiveness of those strategies used by the media specialists was also analyzed. Recommendations made by the media specialists were included.

Presentation of Results

The 30 respondents were asked what grade level the media center services and how many students were in the school that holds the media center. The following two charts contain the information about those who responded. Four worked in a K-5 building, 2 were in a K-6 building, 2 in a K-8 building; 1 in a 6-8 building; 1 from a 7-12 building, 1 from a K-12 building and 16 from a 9-12 building (see Figure 1). Figure 2 refers to number of students that the media center serviced. Two librarians worked in a school with less than 600 students, 2 with 600-900 students, 2 with 900-1500 students and 15 with 1500 plus students.

Figure 1: Grade Levels Serviced by Media Center

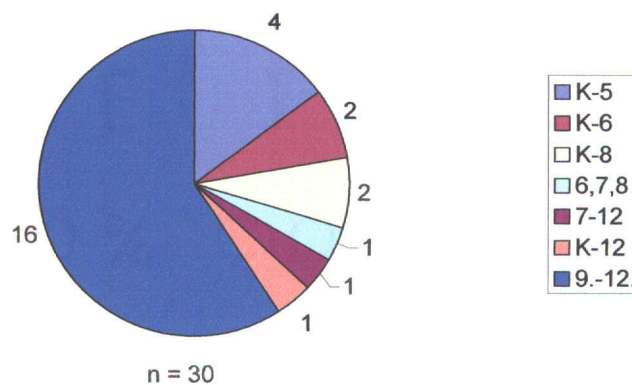
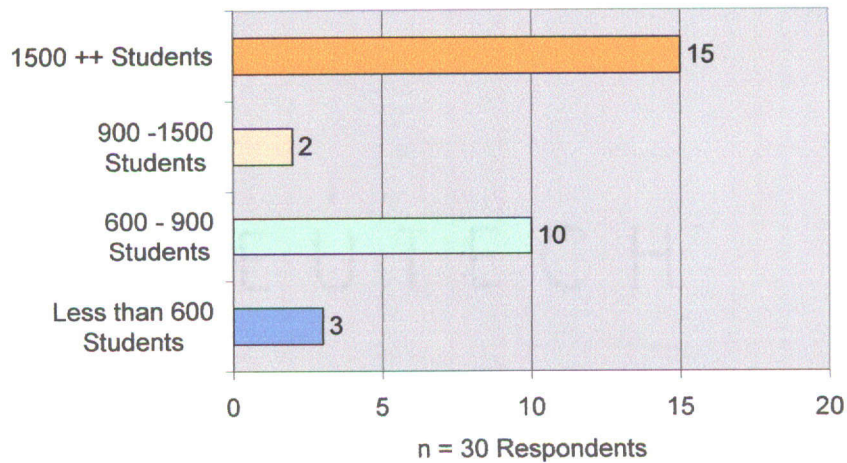


Figure 2: Number of Students in School that are Serviced by the Media Center



They were then asked, how many librarians work in the media center and the highest degree held by the head librarian. Twenty-three worked in a media center with just one librarian, 4 worked in a media center with 2 librarians and 2 worked in a media center with 3 librarians (see Figure 3). Question 16 asked the highest degree held by the head librarian, only 1 had no degree at all, 28 had a Masters in Library Science and one did not respond. Figure 4, refers to the given information.

Figure 3: Number of Media Specialists Working in Each Library

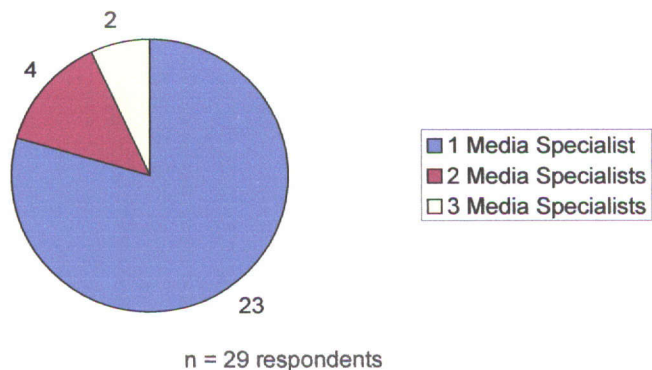
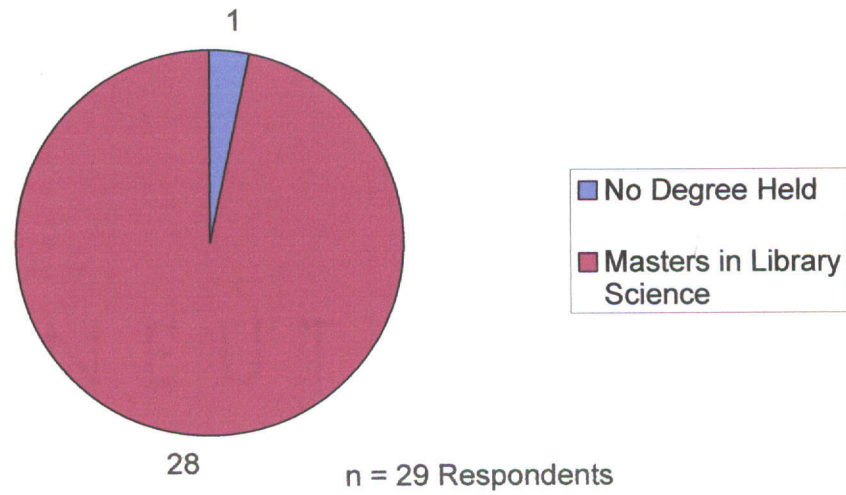
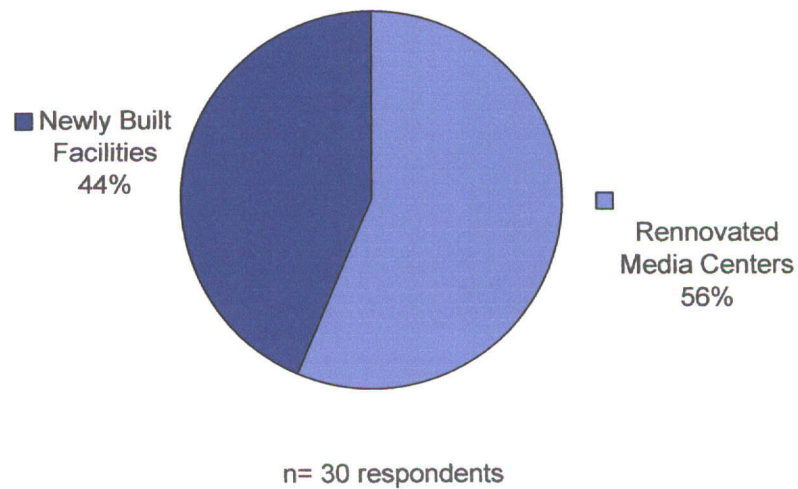


Figure 4: Highest Degree Held by the Head Librarian



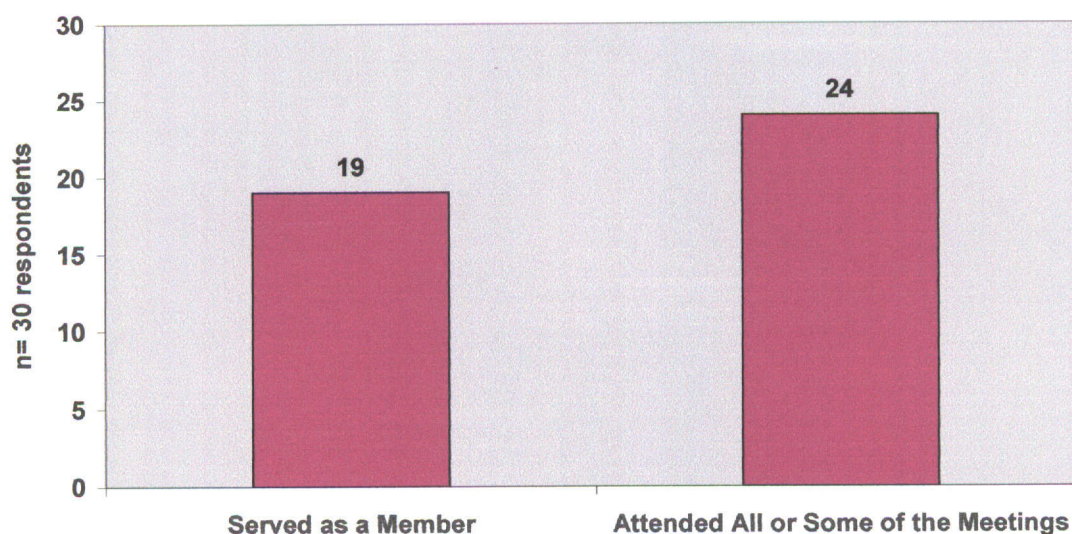
Of the thirty respondents, 44% were involved with new construction and 56% were involved in renovating a media center, as reported in Figure 5.

Figure 5: Renovated Media Centers vs. Newly Built Media Centers



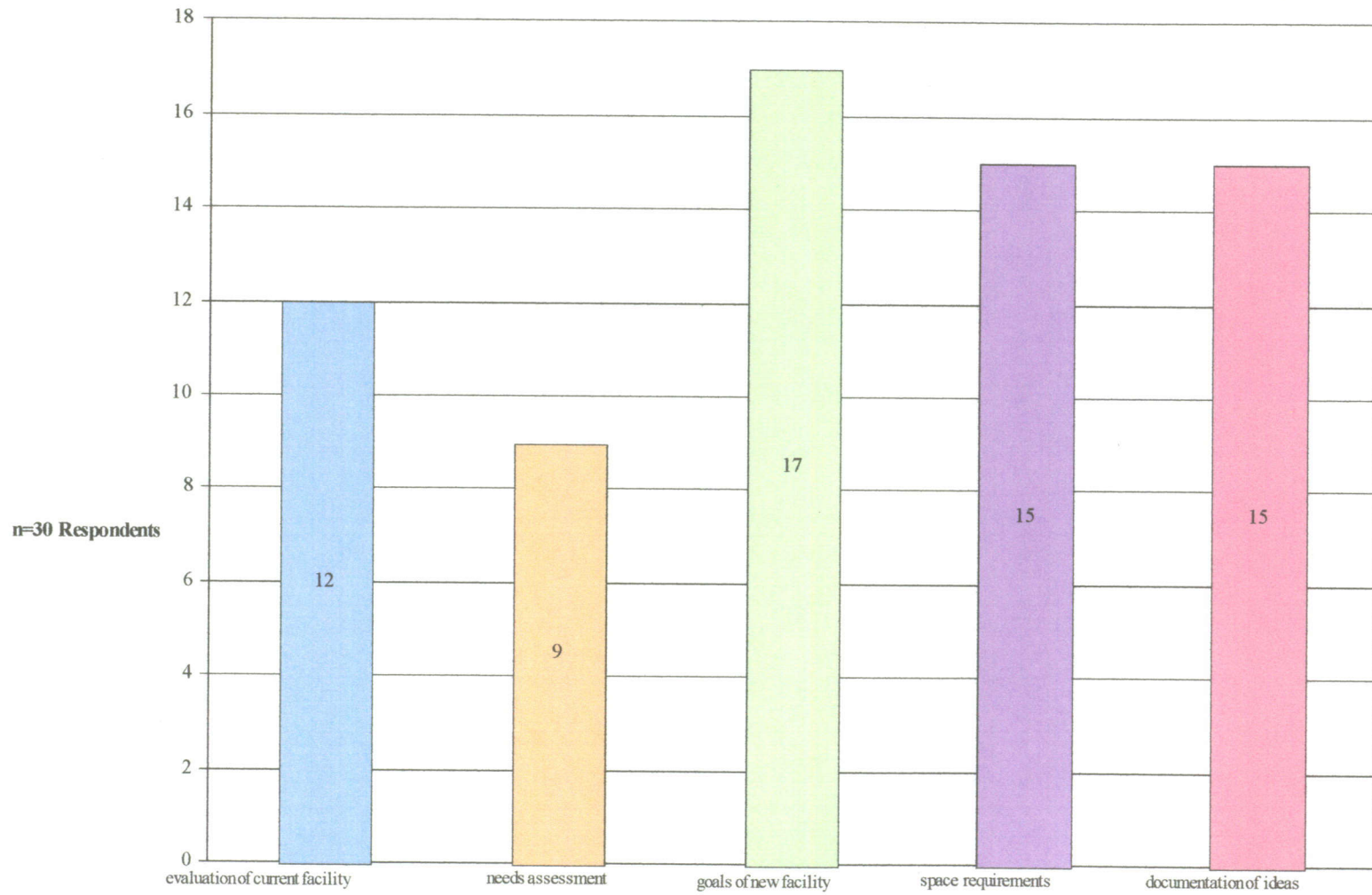
The first phase of the process of renovating or building a new facility was the formation of a committee. As seen in Figure 6, 19 of the 30 respondents served as a member and 24 respondents attended all or some of the meetings.

Figure 6: Formation of a Planning Committee



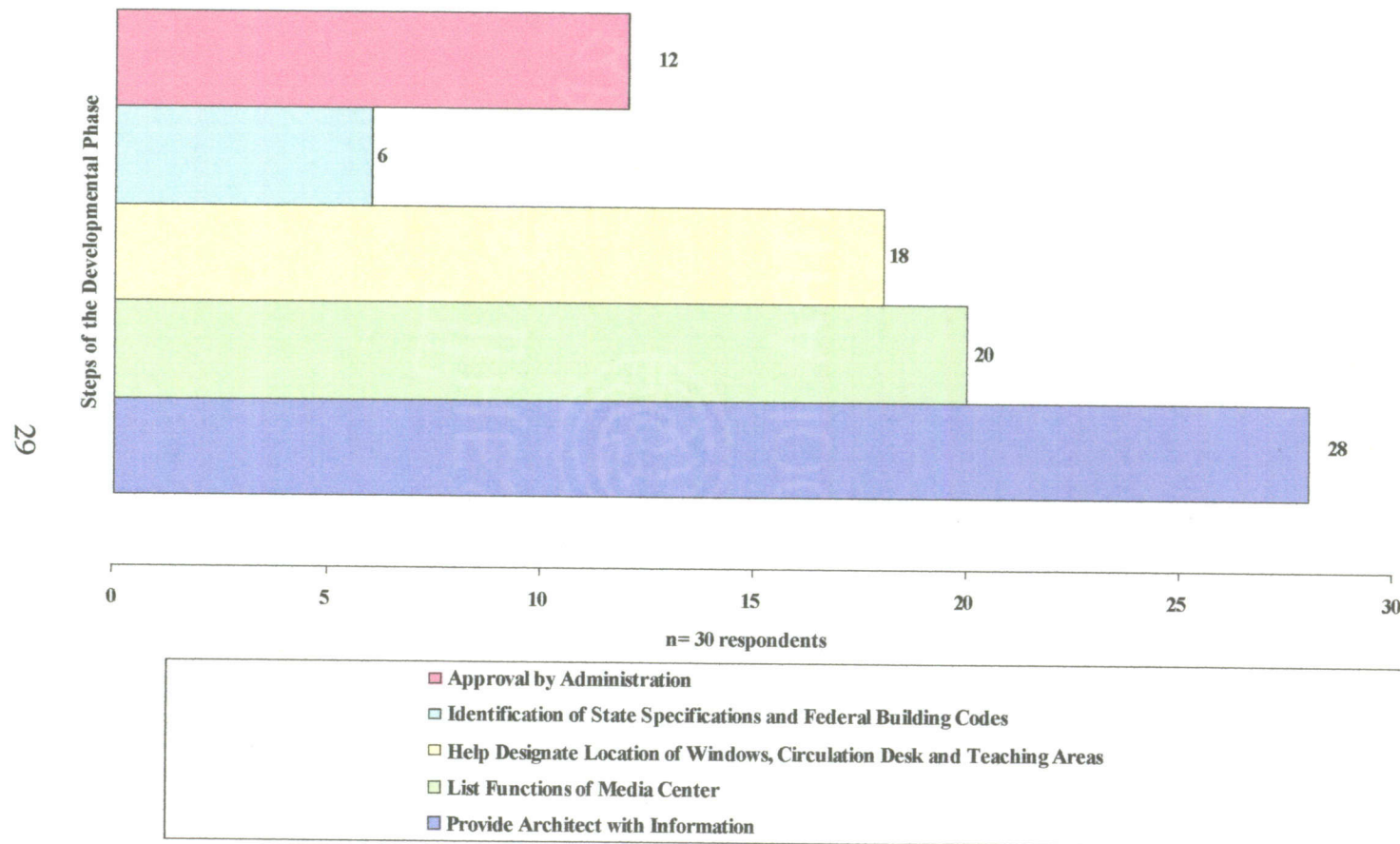
The next phase of a building/renovation process, preliminary needs assessments and recommendations, contained five steps. Twelve responded that yes they did evaluate the physical condition of the facility, 9 performed a needs assessment survey by staff, 17 identified their goals and objectives that were to be achieved by the new media center, 15 performed a projection of the space requirements needed by the renovation or new building project and 15 documented design ideas. Figure 7 shows the information given. It is noted that respondents could choose more than one response.

Figure 7: Preliminary Needs Assessments and Recommendations

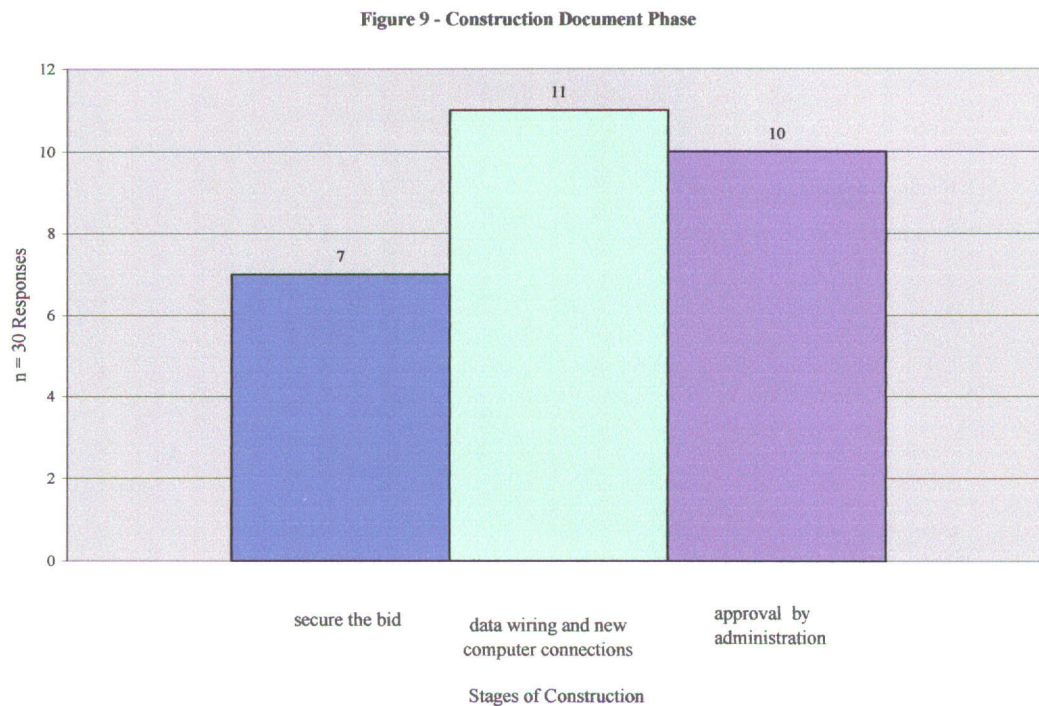


In the developmental phase, Figure 8, 28 provided the architect with pertinent information in regards to the media center, 20 listed functions of the media center, 23 helped in designating the location of the windows, circulation desk, work areas and teaching areas; 6 identified state specifications and building codes; 18 responded that the drawings of the changes needed were done and 12 had the approval of administration. Respondents could choose more than one response.

Figure 8: Developmental Phase



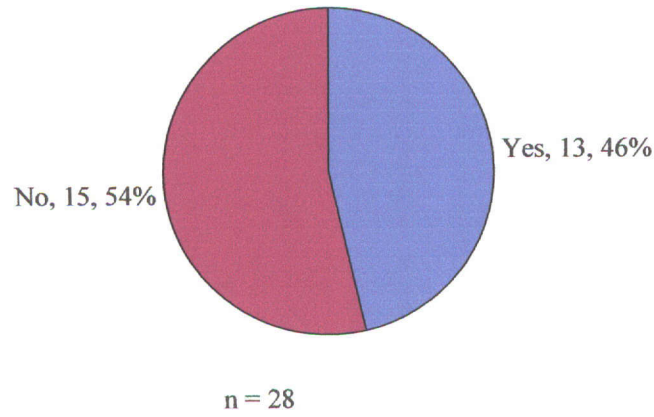
In the construction document phase, 7 responded that drawings were used to secure the contractor's bids, 11 were involved with location of new computer and data-wire outlets and 10 had approval by administration. Figure 9 shows the breakdown of the responses.



During the construction phase, 10 said they were involved with the completion of the new facility or renovation project and 13 helped in preparing the punch list. For the Final Phase, 28 responded that they made notations of problems and 9 said that there problems were addressed.

Of the 30 respondents, 13 said that the needs were met by the new facility or renovation project and 15 said that the needs were not met. Two did not respond either way (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: Project Needs Met by New Facility or Renovation Project



In question 11, when asked how they would change the process that was used to make the renovations or new construction, four did not respond and two said nothing should be changed. Of the remaining 24 remaining respondents, these were their responses:

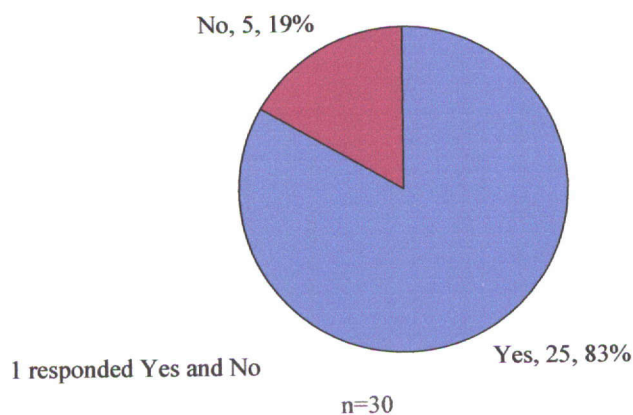
- Educational goals should be identified before the project starts.
- There should be a commitment to the library program and the library media teacher.
- A paper trail of emails, phone messages, meeting notes, plans, drawings and any other important information should be kept.
- Send copies of documentation to administration in charge.
- Understand the budget process limitations and the bid process.
- Be aware of the timeline and deadlines for bids and changes.
- Hire someone who is responsive and not the cheapest bid.

- Insist that architects and the design team visit other school libraries and discuss extensively the function of the facility in regards to working with students.
- The media specialist and technology specialist work with the architect and building foreman on a day-to-day basis.
- Drawings made in the blueprints can change in real life.
- Increase influence of site staff over the politicians in the final design decision.
- There should be more input with the architect before the preliminary drawings. This saves time in redrawing.
- A seasoned media coordinator is needed and a consideration for the age group served should be considered.
- There should also be input from librarians and library consultant.
- Follow suggested information for spacing, areas, location of counters, tables and outlets.
- The media specialist should have greater access to the architect and have final say on floor plan design that is submitted to the contractor.
- A professional librarian should be included from the site or professional library personnel from within the district should be included in all procedures.
- A finished 3-dimensional imaging of the project should be viewed. (Listed by 3 respondents.)
- Look at actual furniture before it is purchased.
- Individual in charge should not be secretive and they should not make it difficult to obtain information.

- The media specialist should be involved in all aspects of the entire process.
(Listed by 5 respondents.)
- The media specialist should ask plenty of questions.
- The media specialist should be involved with the architect before the plans are drawn. The architect should be experienced with libraries.
- Insist that the architect and design team visit other libraries and discuss function of the facility in regards to working with students.
- Architects need to watch how library facilities work and should work to improve the function of the space.

In question 12, the respondents were asked whether the building project was considered a success. Of the respondents, 19% said no and 83% said yes. One person responded yes and no. See Figure 11.

Figure 11: Successful Project



Respondents were asked how it was or was not a success. Reasons why projects were not considered a success included:

- Although the space is large, the shelves new and the space are beautiful it still doesn't accommodate what is needed.
- The new space was not functional. (Listed by 2 respondents.)
- The flaws were due to weight bearing columns, which blocked views and the locations of permanent shelves.
- The new space was awkward to teach in, because it is a hexagonal shape that wasted space. Overheads and computer projections are difficult to use in the new space, but the community loves it. Professional staff must adapt to deal with the changes.
- If the right person had checked on the right things, then the library would be more efficient.

Those who said it was a success gave the following responses:

- The improvements greatly improved the library environment for both the students and the staff.
- The new space is ideal for lessons, author presentations, staff meetings, family reading and technology nights.
- Despite the on-going problems, in the end the changes were the right ones.
- Problems arose in the actual execution of the plan.
- Working with knowledgeable person specializing in libraries made the project a success.
- Even though there were problems, the new media center is beautiful, spacious, efficient and a pleasure to be in and work in.
- The new facility is bright and functional.

- The new facility gives a prominence to the library and the library program that it never received in the past. With increases of the visibility of the library program, allies can be made in fighting for funding, staff and materials.
- They love the new facility, but lots of things could be changed. More outlets more data drops could have been added. This person was thrilled to be able to offer beautiful new facility and expanded uses to our students and communities. Despite on-going problems, in the end changes were the right ones.
- From being in a thirty plus year old facility that was remodeled, to a plan which had focused on creating more work space and change it to facilitate more students access. The space is more inviting and is well lit for students.
- In the end the facility is beautiful, state of the art technology, wireless capability, new computers with a full-time technician and a turn style for counting patrons.
- They received the space needed, but everyone was not delighted. The movable shelves dismayed teachers and the fact that the building did not blend well with the rest of the building from the outside.
- With the expansion of the facility, it allowed for computer use by students, the ability to supervise library space, control noise and easier to supervise. The environment is warm and friendly.
- The success or failure depends more on the people who staff it than the actual facility. Adequate room for classes and adequate shelving for proposed collection are critical.

The next question asked what recommendations could be given to someone if they were to renovate or build a new facility. There were a lot of responses for this question including:

- Stay involved and assert your opinions vigorously.
- Make a point to check on renovations even if told to stay away.
- Be proactive and keep complaining until they fix the problems.
- Make sure if books are to be packed up that you have appropriate size and label boxes with the Dewey Decimal numbers.
- Look at other work done by the firm hired and talk to others who have used their services.
- Slow down and get it right.
- Build bigger than you think you need.
- Make every effort to check on what is happening each day.
- Check on all of the blueprints and diagrams.
- Have opinions to give input before blueprints are made.
- Get into the planning from the very beginning.
- Make architects and electrical people your new best friend.
- Communicate with the principal about the libraries needs.
- Follow the national guidelines from *Information Power*.
- Have experienced media coordinator or supervisor serve on committee.
- Do not compromise at all.
- Visit other libraries to see different arrangements.
- Ask lots of questions.

- Make sure architects understand the library program.
- Attend every workshop and conference session offered dealing with renovations.
- Be visible, listen, advocate and be knowledgeable.
- Prior planning is the key.
- Get to know the contractor.
- Remember there will always be design elements that don't come out the way you want.
- Work with everyone.
- Keep in mind that the meaning of requests can be misinterpreted.
- Stick with an architect who has done libraries before and who is willing to listen to what you have to say.
- Walk the architect through existing facility that is similar to what you want and point out what works and what doesn't work.
- Make a written detailed list of what is needed in the library.
- Keep restrooms and fountains out of the library.
- Get enough seating for two classes.
- Make flexibility a key idea.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The results demonstrated that library media specialists did use the planning processes, some strategies more than others. The results showed that those media specialists who renovated libraries relied on the steps more so than those who were involved in building new facilities. Those media specialists who were involved in building new facilities may have had less money for new facilities than those did for renovated media centers. Also, library media specialists may not have been the ones involved in the planning procedures and therefore did not respond to the survey.

When asked how effective the strategies were and how the strategies could be changed, the media specialists that those who built new facilities had the most responses. The majority of their responses dealt with educating the architect as to the importance, functions and needs of a school library. It was clear that the media specialist also needed to be educated on the planning strategies and the library timelines and procedures that were used to complete each of the tasks.

Conclusions

Figure 12 shows the differences between those who renovated and from those who built a new facility with the first two steps of the planning procedures. Those who renovated were more involved than those who built a new facility. It is possible that those who were involved in building the new facility were either not as experienced and were not included while planning out the new facility. They also may not have completed that part of the survey.

Figure 12: Formation of a Planning Committee and Preliminary Needs Assessments and Recommendations

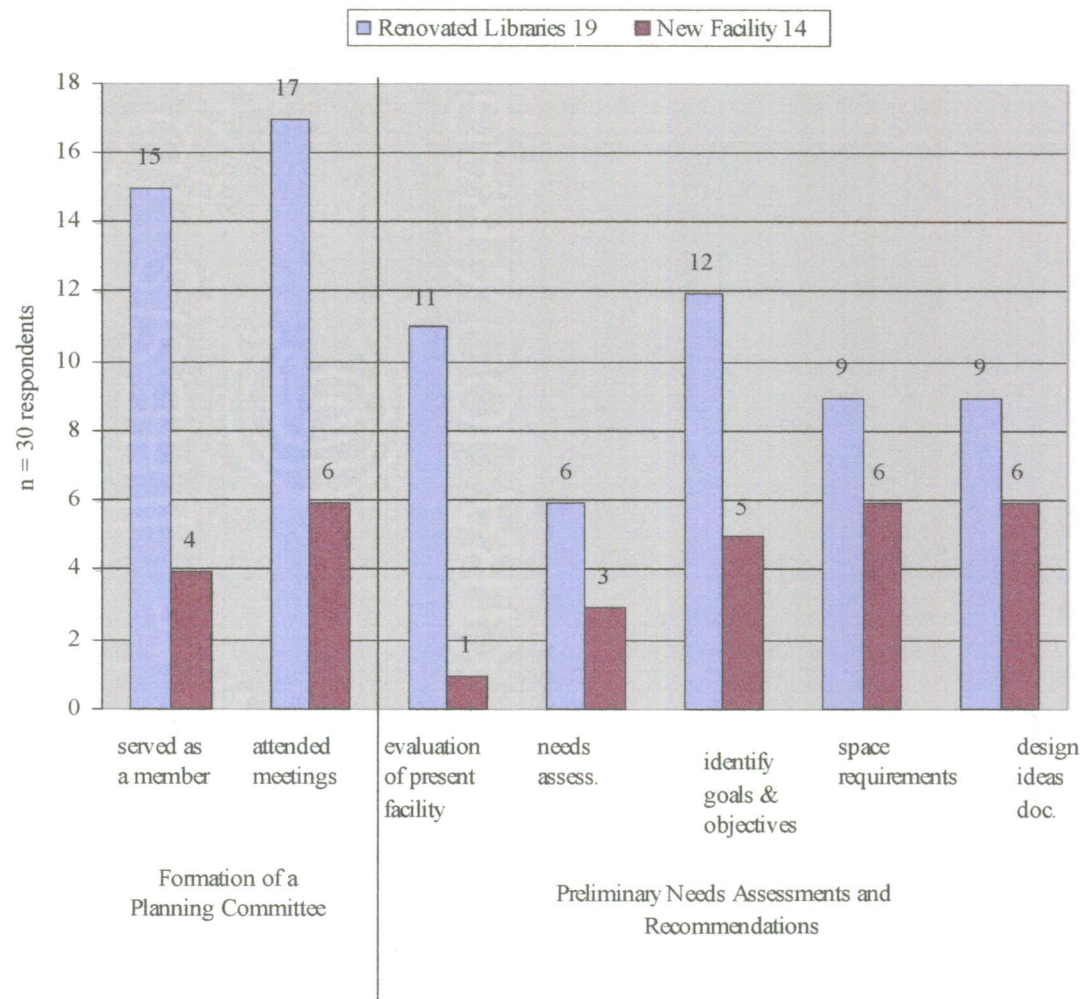


Figure 13 shows the Developmental Phase and the Construction Document Phase. In the Developmental Phase, those who renovated were more involved in this phase. But, those who were involved in building new facilities and those who renovated were involved in the process about the same. This phase involves securing the contractors' bids and checking for new computer and data-wire outlets.

Figure 13: Developmental Phase and Construction Document Phase

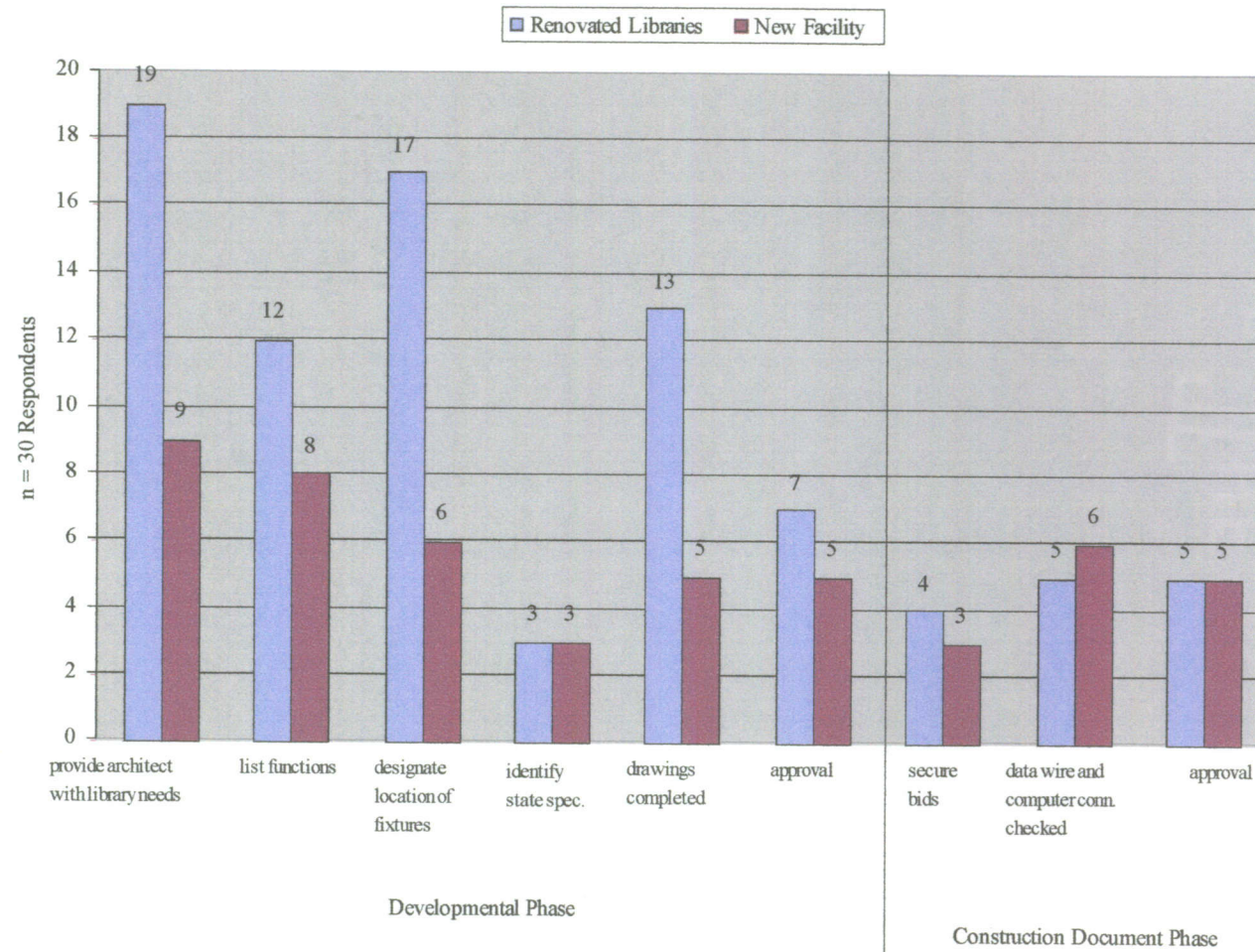
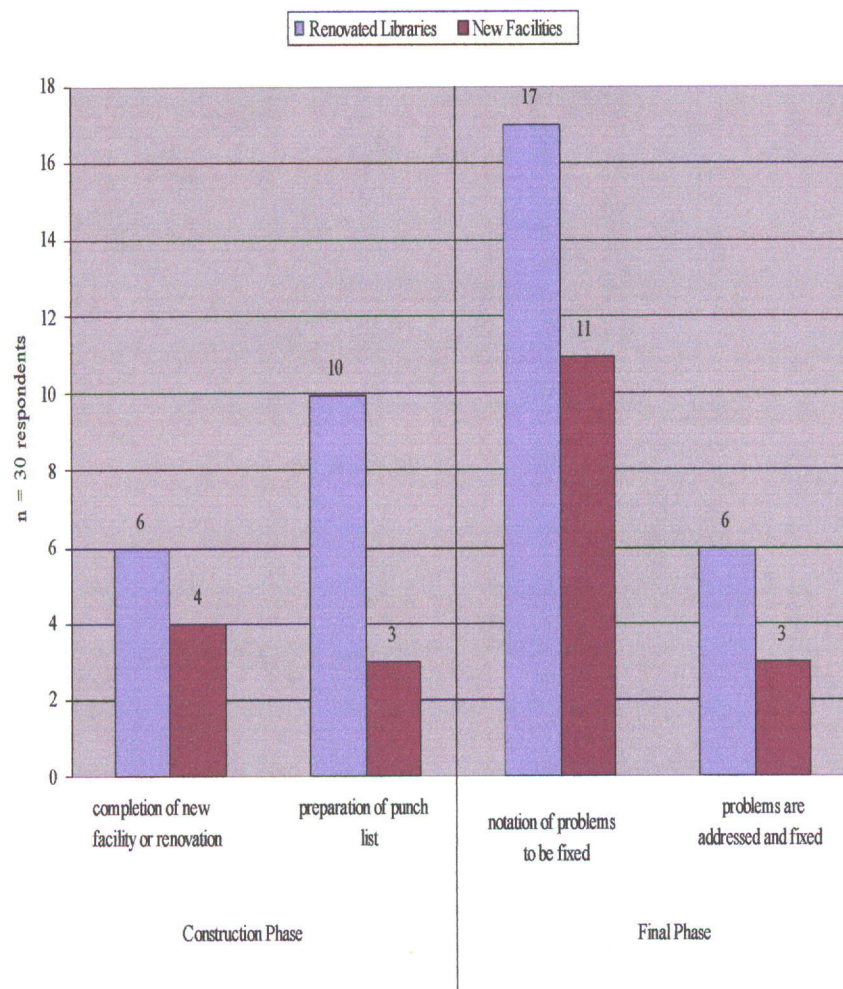


Figure 14 shows the Construction Phase and the Final Phase. As the chart shows, those who renovated were more involved than those who were involved in building new facilities.

Figure 14: Construction Phase and Final Phase



Significance of the Results

The results show that those who have renovated their library were more involved in the planning processes. When the respondents were asked how the process could be changed to better benefit the project, those who responded had the consensus that the media specialist should be aware of all steps, the procedures for those steps and timelines for the entire project. Other library sites should be visited by both the media specialist and architect to see media center layouts, any problems with the sites, how the media center functions and improvements that could be made to the current site in order to make the new media center an improvement over what already has been done.

When the respondents were asked whether their finished project were a success and why or why not, respondents mainly responded that despite any problems that occurred the finished project was a success. Those that were not delighted with the finished site said that adjustments were made where needed to make the site work for them. Those that were not 100% satisfied with the changes were not willing to change. Possibly, teachers in the buildings where renovations or new facilities were built, had a hard time adapting to movable shelving units and the contrast of the looks and/or the use of space of the new facility and the old facility. Adjustments to change were not always easily made by everyone.

When the respondents were asked what recommendations they would give to someone who was about to undergo renovations or building a new library facility, the overall consensus was for the media specialist should make themselves

involved whether asked to or not. It seems that even though the library media specialist has a Masters' Degree in Library Science, who are the experts in their field and would be working in the environment the most, were not taken into account by the architects and administrators. Another important response was to make sure the architect was aware of how the media center functions, the purpose of the media center and the importance of the locations of the circulation desk, teaching areas and wiring outlets.

Also it is important to remember the media specialists may have been non-tenured in their district and therefore was not given the opportunity to be involved in the process. Those who did respond may have skipped some of the questions and the results represent only those who responded to each item. Those who were involved in the procedures may not have had the experience to renovate or build a new facility or they could be new to the field of librarianship.

Recommendations for Further Study

In order to continue the improvements of school media centers, the next step should be to repeat the study with a larger sample group. Then take the recommendations and revamp the checklist for renovating or building a new facility. A separate handbook could accompany the checklist in order to assist media specialists, architects, planning committees and administration. The booklet could break down the steps, telling what should be done in each step and helpful hints in getting the results that are wanted. The booklet could also explain the purposes of the circulation desk and the importance of the range of vision through out the library. The booklet could define terminology and give the

significance and importance of the minor details that are important to those who work in a library. This booklet could site other important reading material that would assist the librarian, architect, planning committee and administration. The booklet could take different perspectives from each of the people's different perspective. After the booklet is used to assist librarians, architects, planning committees and administrators the new steps and booklet could be studied and revamped as needed.

REFERENCES

- Brown, C. R. (2002). *Interior design for libraries*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- California School Library Association. (2004). Retrieved April 8, 2005 from <http://www.schoollibrary.org>
- Educational Media Association of New Jersey. (2005). Retrieved April 4, 2005, from <http://www.emanj.org>
- Erickson, R., & Markuson, C. (2001). *Designing a school library media center for the future*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Fenton, S. (1999, February). Architectural follies. *School Library Journal*. 45: 26-29.
- Hannigan, J. A., & Estes, G. E. (Ed.) (1978). *Media center facilities design*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- Hannigan, J. A., & Vandergrift, K. E. The student's viewpoint. In J.A. Hannigan & G. E. Estes (Eds.) *Media center facilities design* (pp. 14-25). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Jussim, E. (1974). Personal space and the media center. In J.A. Hannigan & G.E. Estes (Eds.) *Media center facilities design* (pp. 7-10). Chicago: American Library Association.
- Klasing, J. P. (1991). *Designing and renovating school library media centers*. Chicago: American Library Association.
- McCain, M. M. & Merrill, M. (2001). *Dictionary for school library media specialists, a practical and comprehensive guide*. Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.
- Powell, R.R. (2003). *Basic research methods for librarians*. Greenwich Connecticut: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
- Thompson, G. (1989). *Planning and design of library buildings, third edition*. Boston: Butterworth Architecture.
- Vandergrift, K. E. (1976). Persons and environment. In J.A. Hannigan & G. E. Estes (Eds.), *Media center facilities design* (pp. 10-13). Chicago: American Library Association.

APPENDIX A
COVER LETTER

Dear Fellow Media Specialist,

I am conducting research as part of Rowan University's Library Science Master's Degree Program. If you have been involved in renovating or building a new school media center, please help me by completing the attached survey, Renovating/Building School Media Centers.

The results will be kept anonymous, but if you would like the results please include your email at the end of the survey.

Return Surveys to haddeitch@yahoo.com

Thank you for your time,

Heather Deitch
Rowan University
haddeitch@yahoo.com

APPENDIX B
QUESTIONNAIRE

Renovating School Media Centers Survey

Circle the appropriate answer.

1. Did you renovate or build a new school media center facility?

renovated

new facility

2. Approximately how long ago was the facility changed?

Please check off those steps and/or strategies that you were involved with during your process of renovating or building a new school media center. (Check off all that apply.)

3. Formation of a planning committee

_____ served as a member

_____ attended meetings (all or some)

4. Preliminary Needs Assessments and Recommendations

_____ evaluation of the physical condition of the present facility

_____ needs assessment of the new facility survey taken by staff

_____ identification of goals and objectives to be achieved by new media center

_____ projection of space requirements needed by renovated space or new facility

_____ documentation of design ideas

5. Developmental Phase

_____ provide architect with pertinent information in regards to needs of media center

_____ list functions of media center

_____ help designate location of windows, circulation desk, work areas, teaching areas,

_____ identification of state specifications and federal building codes

_____ completion of drawings of changes desired

_____ approval by administration and committee

6. Construction Document Phase

_____ drawings used to secure contractors' bids and guide actual construction or renovation of facility

_____ connections checked for location of new computer and data-wire outlets

_____ approval by administration and committee

7. Construction Phase

_____ completion of new facility or renovation

_____ preparation of punch list

8. Final Phase

- _____ notation of problems that need to be fixed
- _____ all problems are addressed, fixed and completed

Please answer the following questions in the space provided.

9. After your Project was completed did you feel the needs of the program were met by the renovation or new construction? Explain.

10. Were these additional changes needed? Explain.

11. If you were to change the process that was used to make the renovations or new construction, what would you change?

12. Did you consider the project to be a success?	Yes	No
Why or why not?		

13. What recommendations would you give someone if they were to renovate or build a new facility?

14. What are the grade levels that are serviced by the media center? _____

15. How many students are in the school? _____

16. How many librarians work in the media center? _____

17. What is the highest degree of the head librarian? _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill in the survey. The results will be used in a Masters Thesis: Planning Procedures for School Media Centers. Please return the survey to the following email address:

haddeitch@yahoo.com

Thank you,

Heather Deitch

haddeitch@yahoo.com

